



## New Jersey Department of Children and Families Policy Manual

Manual:	CP&P	Child Protection and Permanency	Effective Date:
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Chapter:	B	Resource Care	5-28-2013
Subchapter:	4	Foster Home Records	
Issuance:	100	<b>Contents of a Foster Home Record</b>	

### Contents of Resource Family Home Record 5-28-2013

In addition to the case record developed in NJS, the system of record, the RFSW develops a "paper" resource home record for each family, consisting of the results of references, background checks, and original or copies, as applicable, of all forms used in the home study process.

CP&P shares a copy of the Home Study with the applicant prior to licensure, to promote full disclosure and ensure the accuracy of the information captured in the study. Reference letters and the psycho-social inventory are not shared. A statement, summarizing the results of each reference, is provided. As a safeguard, to ensure the Home Study is not used for other purposes, it contains the following language:

"The Home Study has been prepared by/for the New Jersey Department of Children and Families, Division of Child Protection & Permanency for the express purpose of the placement of a child under the supervision of the Division, including Interstate Home Study Assessments. The Division disclaims any responsibility for any other use of this Home Study."

The resource home record includes:

- NJ SAFE Home Study Report;
- Questionnaire I and Questionnaire II;
- Psychosocial;
- Financial Statement;
- CP&P Form [5-34](#), Checklist of Standards for Resource Family Homes;

- Copies of all correspondence with the applicant and about the applicant;
- A copy of each applicant's automobile driver's license or birth certificate (forward a copy to OOL);
- A copy of the applicant's marriage/civil union certificate;
- A copy of the divorce certificate or dissolution of civil union certificate, when applicable;
- A signed CP&P Form [5-5](#), Resource Family Parent Agreement;
- Documentation indicating that pre-service training has been completed;
- CP&P Form [11-50](#), Acknowledgement of Receipt of Notice of Privacy Practices;
- Waiver Request, CP&P Form [17-1](#), if applicable;
- All required references - All reference responses are confidential and are divulged only at the discretion of CP&P.

#### NJS -

- Enter all information pertaining to the resource family home into the NJS Resource Home window.
- Document contacts and activities in a Resource Note.

All solicited reference responses are confidential, and may not be divulged as a matter of policy.

### **Updating of Resource Family Home Record 4-11-2005**

The resource family home record is updated by the Resource Family Support Worker as is necessary and appropriate to:

- tell staff who are considering the use of a resource family home any changes in that family which may affect the placement of a new child for foster or adoptive care, and
- document actions taken and decisions made regarding the expanded, continued, or discontinued use of the home.

Changes in the following areas are specifically noted in the record:

- family composition,
- financial/employment status,
- marital/civil union status,
- member's health,
- relocation, and
- any other information which affects the care of foster children in the home, including resource family home abuse allegations and investigations.

Such entries are made as the changes occur so that the record is current.

The Resource Family Support Worker includes a statement as to whether the change has affected the care of children in the home. Assistance is provided to the resource family provider, if necessary.

Indicate in the record if the resource parent is interested in adopting a child. Notify Adoption Operations.

When a new member becomes part of the resource family household, obtain the following information:

- name,
- date of birth,
- relationship to the family,
- special needs of the adult or child,
- services utilized by the adult or child,
- employer/school,
- medical reference,
- criminal history record check, including a fingerprint check (for
- Full Record Review - NJS inquiry (for adults).

At the discretion of the Resource Family Support Worker, additional information, such as personal or employment references, may be requested. It is important to ascertain what circumstances precipitated the new member's arrival into the resource family home.

The Foster Home Reevaluation, CP&P Form [26-23](#), is completed annually by the Resource Family Support Worker and placed in the file.

The resource family home record is also updated by filing in it letters or other documents (see [CP&P-IV-B-4-400](#)) from the resource family provider(s) or others concerning the resource family home, foster care, or foster children in the home. If the letter concerns a particular child, the original is filed in the child's case record and a copy filed in the resource family home record. If the document concerns only a particular resource family provider, the original is filed in the resource family home record.

At the time of the original Home Study and at each re-evaluation, the resource family providers are reminded that they may submit information for filing in their record.

### **Storage, Removal, and Accessibility of Active Resource Family Home Records 12-29-93**

All active resource family home records are stored in a lockable file which is readily accessible to professional staff. Records which are temporarily removed for review or other purposes are recorded on a sign-out card which is put in the pendaflex file and which notes the borrower's name and the date the record was removed. RFSU staff are responsible for the administration and use of the resource family home file.

### **Confidentiality of Resource Family Home Records 5-28-2013**

Resource family home records are confidential documents which are accessible only to professional CP&P staff, the resource family parents, and a third party at the resource family parent's request, such as an attorney or another resource family parent. See [CP&P-IV-B-4-200](#), Presence of a Third Party at Review.

CP&P may not release information about the resource family parents or the licensed Home Study to other agencies or people without an Authorization for Release of Information, CP&P Form [26-15](#), signed by the resource family parent giving CP&P permission to share the specified information with the identified agency or individual.

### **Closing Resource Family Home Records 6-17-91**

When a resource family home is closed for any reason, a closing summary is written and filed in the record by the Resource Family Support Specialist.

Closed resource family home records are transferred immediately to a separate "closed" resource family home file. Previously active resource family home files, which are closed, are retained either in the Records Storage Center or in the Local Office for six years after closing in a separate "closed" file.

A record retention schedule is established and tickled for a six-year destruction schedule, for those resource family home records retained at the LO.

### **Storage of Closed Resource Family Home Record                      6-17-91**

Closed resource family home records may be stored at the Local Office, or, if space there is limited, at the Records Storage Center in Trenton. For those offices requesting storage at the Records Storage Center, a memo indicating the names and numbers of closed resource family home records must accompany the closed resource family home records which are sent to the Supervisor of the Records Storage Center. All records designated for storage must be placed in special boxes available from CP&P Records Management and be accompanied by a "Records Transfer Request Form." At the Records Storage Center the closed resource family home files will be retained for six years, after which time they will automatically be destroyed. If the Local Office does not desire a particular closed resource family home file destroyed, that record must be stored at the Local Office and not sent to the Records Storage Center.

### **Destruction of Resource Family Home Records                      12-29-93**

Closed resource family home records which have been stored at the Records Storage Center will be automatically destroyed after six years. For those closed resource family home records which have been stored at the Local Offices, send a memo to the Records Storage Center requesting authority to destroy the records. Indicate in the memo the names, numbers, and dates of retention for all records in question. Once approval is obtained from the Bureau of Archives, the Local Offices is advised by memo to destroy (shred) the records by sending the record to the Area Office to be shredded. Material to be destroyed may be placed in any box that is portable, taped securely, and clearly labeled.